

Inmate at Bristol County House of Correction tests positive for COVID-19

An inmate and a corrections officer at the Bristol County Sheriff's Office recently tested positive for COVID-19.

The county inmate, who is housed in the Bristol County House of Correction on Faunce Corner Road in Dartmouth, was sent to St. Luke's Hospital for a preexisting medical condition on April 29. He was given a COVID-19 test on April 30. He received notice of a positive test on Friday, May 1 and returned to the jail in Dartmouth, where he was and currently remains housed in a single cell in the medical unit. He is being closely monitored by health care professionals.

The medical team has been continuously assessing the housing unit he was in before being transported to St. Luke's. No inmates in that unit have reported symptoms linked to COVID-19.

The corrections officer was last at work on Wednesday, April 29, and Thursday, April 30, on the hospital detail with the inmate at St. Luke's. He didn't feel well on April 30, left early and got tested, and was notified about the positive result on Sunday, May 2.

"There are almost 70,000 COVID cases in Mass., including more than 4,000 in Bristol County," Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson said Tuesday afternoon. "We feel very fortunate that none of the cases among our staff or the incarcerated population is life-threatening."

Currently, seven Bristol County Sheriff's Office staff members are away from the facility recovering from COVID-19. Four others have fully recovered and returned to duty.

The inmate is the first county prisoner in a Bristol County Sheriff's Office correctional facility to test positive for COVID-19.

Over the past few months, the Bristol County Sheriff's Office has instituted many protocols to protect inmates, detainees and staff from the Coronavirus outbreak. Some of those measures include:

- All employees were given masks that must be worn inside the secure perimeter of our facilities. All inmates and detainees have also been given masks to wear for protection.
- All areas of the facility are being cleaned\disinfected every day on every shift.
- All staff members are being screened before entering the buildings; new arriving inmates are being screened before being accepted into custody.
- In-person visitation has been suspended to limit the number of people coming in and out.